



DELAWARE
DEMOCRATIC PARTY

**RULES OF THE
KENT COUNTY
DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE**

AS ADOPTED, March 12, 2022
And as amended November 30, 2022

JOHN STARKE, CHAIR

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PREAMBLE

WHEREAS the Democratic Party is and always has been the Party of the people;

WHEREAS it is the belief of the Kent County Democratic Committee that this Party should be open to all interested persons so as to allow for meaningful participation by all of its members;

WHEREAS the Democratic Party is open to all members of the Kent County Democratic Committee regardless of race, gender, gender identification, age, color, national origin, religion, ethnic identity, sexual orientation, disability status, economic status or philosophical persuasion;

WHEREAS the Kent County Democratic Committee is open, inclusive, and transparent in its conduct of Party business; and

WHEREAS any person regardless of race, gender, gender identification, age, color, national origin, religion, ethnic identity, sexual orientation, disability status, economic status or philosophical persuasion, who is a registered Democrat and who supports the purposes of the Democratic Party may participate fully in any Party meeting and may be elected to any Party office in accordance with applicable Party rules and statutes.

NOW THEREFORE, the Kent County Democratic Committee hereby establishes in this document the rules that its members shall follow when conducting the business of the Kent County Democratic Committee, and all its subdivisions.

RULE 1

NAME, PURPOSE AND MEMBERSHIP

1.1 Name

The organization shall be known as the Kent County Democratic Committee. It is a Committee of the Delaware Democratic Party. Membership shall be open to all registered Democrats residing in Kent County.

1.2. Purpose

- A. The purpose of the Kent County Democratic Committee is to recruit, elect and support Democratic Party officials in Kent County Delaware and at State and Federal levels of government who will govern in ways that are aligned with Democratic values as set forth in the Delaware Democratic Platform.

- B. In furtherance of this purpose, the Kent County Democratic Committee shall publicize fully, and in such manner as to assure notice to all interested parties, a full description of the procedures for the selection and the qualifications for the officers and representatives of the Kent County Democratic Committee. Publication of these procedures shall be done in such a fashion that all prospective and current members of the Kent County Democratic Committee will be fully and adequately informed of the pertinent procedures in time to participate in the selection process, and prospective candidates or applicants for any elected or appointed position within the Democratic Party will have a full and adequate opportunity to compete for office.

1.3 Membership

- A. The Kent County Democratic Committee shall support the broadest possible voter registration without discrimination on grounds of race, gender, gender identification, age, color, national origin, religion, ethnic identity, sexual orientation, disability status, economic status, or philosophical persuasion.

- B. No test of membership, nor any oaths of loyalty to the Democrat Party shall be required or used which has the effect of requiring prospective or current members of the Democratic Party to acquiesce in, condone or support discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, gender identification, age, color, national origin, religion, ethnic identity, sexual orientation, disability status or economic status.

1.4 Authority to Endorse Candidates

- A. The Kent County Democratic Committee and its Representative Districts shall have the sole right to endorse any local Democratic candidate or candidates within the County or within its Representative Districts.
- B. A Representative District may submit to the County Committee recommendations for endorsement of a County-wide Democratic candidate.
- C. The State Committee shall have the sole right to endorse any state-wide Democratic candidate after considering the recommendations of the County and Representative Committees.
- D. The respective body for endorsement shall determine the appropriate process for endorsement, which shall not conflict with any State Rules.
- E. Endorsements, and recommendations to endorse shall not take place without advance notice to committee members and the Executive Board.

1.5 Conduct of Meetings

- A. All public meetings at all levels of the Democratic Party are open to all members of the Kent County Democratic Committee regardless of race, gender, gender identification, age, color, national origin, religion, ethnic identity, sexual orientation, disability status, economic status, or philosophical persuasion.
- B. The time and place for all public meetings of the Kent County Democratic Committee on all levels should be publicized fully and, in such manner, as to assure timely notice to all interested persons. Such meetings must be held in places accessible to all Party members and large enough to accommodate all interested persons.
- C. A quorum of at least one-third of the elected members of any body is required to conduct official business, subject to Rule 2.2 (E). Associate Members do not count towards a quorum.

- D. Except as otherwise provided, all questions before the Kent County Democratic Committee shall be determined by majority vote of those members present and voting in person or by proxy.
- E. Pursuant to the charter of the Democratic National Committee, votes shall not be taken by secret ballot.
- F. Proxy Voting. Voting by proxy is not permitted at the County Convention. Voting by proxy shall be permitted in county committee affairs. Proxies may be either general or limited and either instructed or uninstructed. All proxies shall be in writing and transferable if so specified. Only members of the County Committee may carry another member's proxy. No member of the County Committee may at any one time hold or exercise a proxy for more than one other member of the County Committee.

RULE 2

PARTY ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

2.1 Political Subdivisions

The Kent County Democratic Committee is one of the four political subdivisions of the Delaware Democratic Party. It shall be organized as a County Committee and its District Committees consisting of the Representative Districts of Kent County.

- A. Rules. These rules are the mandatory rules approved by the Kent County Convention of the Kent County Democratic Committee. The County must establish and make easily accessible rules for the governance of the Democratic Party within its jurisdiction; however, the rules may not be contrary to rules approved for the Delaware Democratic Party. Within thirty (30) days after adoption or amendment of such rules, the Kent County Chair shall cause a copy of its rules, reflecting any amendments, to be distributed to every member of such subdivision's District Committee, to the State Chair, and subsequently, to any registered Democrat in said subdivision on request.
- B. Officers. Each subdivision shall elect a chair. The rules of each subdivision shall provide for the election or appointment of vice chair(s), a secretary, a treasurer, and such other officers appointed or elected by the party committee.

- C. Executive Committee. An Executive Committee consisting of the Chairs of each Representative Committee and the Chairs and officers of the Kent County Democratic Committee shall be the governing body of the Committee. There shall be a Chair, two gender balanced Vice Chairs, a Secretary, and a Treasurer.
- D. Finances. The Treasurer of the Kent County Democratic Committee shall be responsible for the management of the funds of the subdivision. The Treasurer shall file financial reports from the Kent County subdivision and its Representative Districts to the state party and to the State Board of Elections. All financial records of the County subdivision or District Committee shall be available for inspection by any committee member in said subdivision or Representative District.
- E. Terms. The rules of each subdivision shall provide that in any year after enactment of these rules, each member of a County Committee shall be selected in the first four months of the year after a presidential election for a term of four years.

2.2 District Committees

- A. Basic Unit. Within each subdivision, the basic unit of Organization of the Democratic Party shall be the State Representative District. (“Representative District”).
- B. Composition. Each District Committee shall have two duly elected members.
- C. Term: The term of office of the members shall be for four years. Any members elected to fill a vacancy shall only serve the balance of the unexpired term.
- D. Organization and Election.
 - 1. Local Rules. Each District Committee shall be organized, and its members shall be elected in accordance with these rules except in cases of a vacancy as provided in Rule 2.2(c)(4) requiring that members shall not have been registered as a member of any other political party with one (1) year prior to their election.

2. On or before the first Thursday in March of the year following a presidential election, a meeting shall be held in a public place within each Representative District for the purpose of nominating candidates for membership on the Representative District Committee. On or before the first Monday in February of the years following a presidential election each outgoing District chair shall submit to the Secretary of the County Committee a notice of the place, date, and hour of the nominating meeting. They shall also transmit a copy of said notice to each Member of the Representative District Committee in accordance with these rules not less than 10 days before the meeting. The Secretary of the County Committee shall arrange to publish the place, date and hour for each Representative District meeting 7 days in advance of the meeting. Notice may be sent for email or other electronic means as well as by posting said notice on Democratic Party websites and other means for social media.
3. At the nominating meeting, each person nominated either shall be present in person or shall have filed on their behalf with the Representative District Chair on or before that date, a signed letter of intent to be nominated. Within 4 days after the nominating meeting, the Representative District Chair shall certify to the County Secretary the names and address of the persons nominated without contest, who shall then be deemed duly elected, and the name and address of each person nominated with contest. Within 8 days after the nominating meeting each person with contest shall file with the County Secretary a signed letter of interest to contest and include therewith the filing fee as determined by the executive committee.
4. Residence; Party Activity. Except in the case of vacancies, members of the local committee shall be registered Democrats in the election district in which they reside and which they will represent. The committee member shall not have been registered as a member of another political party for one year prior to their election.
5. Vacancies. Vacancies in a District Committee shall be filled with persons meeting the requirements of these rules by a majority of the members of the Committee; provided, however, that such persons need not reside in the election district that they shall represent but must be registered Democrats in the Representative District they will represent. Vacancies may be filled at any time, but

District Committee members must have been elected or appointed thirty (30) days before voting on endorsements or recommendations for endorsement.

- E. Ex Officio Elected Official Members. Elected officials (defined here as any person elected as a Democrat in a partisan election at the county, city, state, or federal level) who reside in a Representative District are deemed Elected Official Members of the Representative District Committee. These members are exempt from attendance requirements, and their absence shall not count against quorum requirements, but they shall count towards quorum if in attendance (for matters on which they may vote). They may not serve as an officer of a District Committee. Other than in the matters of (i) endorsements and recommendations for endorsements regarding a partisan office for which they are running and (ii) disbursing committee funds, Elected Official Members shall have full voting rights.
1. Elected Official Members may not be elected as District Committee members or associate members. An official shall cease being an Elected Official Member when the term of their respective office ends.
 2. Representative District Committee members (and associate members) who have filed to run for partisan office or are otherwise a bona fide candidate may not vote in endorsements or recommendations for endorsements in the race in which they are participating.
- F. Associate Members. Members of the Representative District Committees may at any time after the election of officers propose associate members who shall meet the requirements of these rules for members. The committee shall approve membership by a majority vote. Associate Members or Associates are active and registered Democrats not elected, but willing to volunteer their time and talents to the Representative District's mission of engaging others to vote in party business. They regularly attend Representative District meetings; however, they are not eligible to vote in party business and are not members of the County Committee.
- G. Officers of District Committees. At its first meeting after the election of committee members, each District Committee shall elect a chair, vice chair, secretary, and treasurer, which officers shall be registered Democrats and residents of the district. Although a District Chair need not be a member of the District Committee, such District Chair shall represent

their district on the Subdivision Committee and shall have a full vote in all matters pertaining to the Subdivision Committee. Officers of the District Committee shall be elected at such times and on such terms as provided in Rule 2.2(D).

1. Each chair shall, immediately following the meeting at which the district officers are elected and thereafter, whenever requested by the State Chair, provide the State Chair a list of the names and addresses of the members and officers of the Representative District Committee, and shall promptly inform the State Chair of any changes in that list.
- H. Meetings. Meetings of the District Committees shall be held monthly, at least six (6) months of each year. Reasonable notice shall be given to all members of the committee, and all meetings shall be open to any interested Democrats.
- I. Notice. Notice shall be reasonable if given five (5) days before a regular meeting.
- J. Removal. Members and officers may be removed for cause by a majority vote of the Representative District committee, after a hearing before said committee. These rules provide for an appeal to the Executive Committee or other authorized committees as well as appeals to the State party.

2.3 Delaware Democratic Organization

- A. Any entity that purports to be or wishes to organize as a Delaware Democratic Club or caucus shall embody the goals, beliefs and values of the Delaware Democratic Party and the Democratic National Committee.
- B. Except those Delaware clubs or caucuses organized as 501(c)(3) or (4) organizations, political actions committees or otherwise separately incorporated, no Delaware Democratic club or caucus may accept donations until it is officially recognized by the State Committee. The State Committee may revoke a Democratic club's or caucus' authority to accept donations if the club or caucus no longer embodies the goals, beliefs and values of the Delaware Democratic Party and the Democratic National Committee. The State committee may delegate these responsibilities to the State Chair.
- C. Before a Delaware Democratic club or caucus may be recognized, it must provide the State Chair a copy of their charter, bylaws and or other organizational documents. The organizational document must include the

purpose, qualifications for membership and procedure for the election of officers of the club or caucus.

RULE 3

Kent County Convention

3.1 Powers of the Kent County Convention.

The supreme power of the Democratic Party of Kent County is vested in the County convention of Delegates.

3.2 Composition of the Kent County Convention

- A. The County is divided into its Representative Districts.
- B. At the County Convention each Representative District Office and each Election District Committee Person of each Representative District in Kent County shall be a voting delegate.
- C. The County Convention shall be held not less than 60 days prior to the State Convention.
- D. At the Convention the delegates shall elect by majority vote of those present a County Chair, two (2) Vice Chairs (gendered balanced), a Treasurer and a Secretary and an at large member of the State Executive Committee.
- E. The County Chair shall appoint a judge to oversee the election of officers. Once a Chair is selected, they shall take over the balance of the election with the judge providing the ruling on nominations and voting.
- F. At the convention the County Treasurer shall present the Kent County Democratic Committee Treasurer's Report as of that date, prior to the election of a new County Treasurer.
- G. At the convention the delegates shall elect one at large member to the State Democratic Executive Committee pursuant to State Party Rule 6.2(c).

- H. The State chair shall notify the Kent County Chair in writing of the number of delegates and alternates allotted to each Representative District for the State Convention. The County Chair shall, in turn, likewise notify the district chairs, prior to district elections.

3.3 Order of Business.

The County Convention shall be chaired by the incumbent County Chair until their successor is elected. The order of business shall be:

1. Call to order by the County Chairs
2. Convention call to order.
3. Recess for District Caucus, if necessary.
4. Nomination and election of Kent County Chair.
5. Assumption of duties by newly elected County Chair.
6. Report of Treasurer.
7. Election of Vice Chairs, Treasurer and Secretary
8. Election of at large representative to the State Democratic Executive Committee.
9. Miscellaneous Business
10. Adjournment to reconvene at the call of the Kent County Executive Committee.

RULE 4

COUNTY COMMITTEE

4.1 General

The direction and general management of the Kent County Democratic Committee shall be vested in the Kent County Democratic Executive Committee to be known as the Executive Committee, the officers of which shall be elected by the Committee Members of the Representative Districts in the County.

4.2 Composition of the County Committee

The County Committee shall consist of:

- A. The five (5) officers of the County Committee.
- B. The chair and treasurer of each Representative District in the County. Vacancies among the subdivision representatives shall be filled pursuant to the rules of the subdivision.

- C. Up to three (3) members-at-large may be appointed by the County Chair, to serve at the pleasure of such Chair, with the intention of increasing diversity on the committee.
- D. The two National Committee persons.
- E. A non-voting representative of each Democratic elected state-wide official, to serve at the pleasure of such official.
- F. A non-voting representative of each Democratic caucus of the General Assembly, to serve at the pleasure of such caucus.
- G. A non-voting representative of such other active Democratic group as the County Chair shall choose to invite from time to time; and
- H. A non-voting Parliamentarian to be appointed by the State Chair.

4.3 Standing Committees

- A. Finance Committee. There shall be a Finance Committee consisting of the County Committee Treasurer, who shall serve as Chair and the treasurer of each Representative District. The County Committee Chair may appoint additional members at their sole discretion.
- B. Candidate Support Committee. There shall be a Candidate Support Committee consisting of persons who shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the County Chair, to recruit, support and train candidates.
- C. Rules Committee. There shall be a Rules Committee consisting of four (4) members selected by the Committee Chair one of whom shall be the County Committee parliamentarian. The Rules Committee shall engage in an ongoing review of the County and Representative District Subdivision rules and make recommendations for state rules revisions to the County Executive Committee from time to time.
- D. Other Committees. The County Chair may appoint additional committees at their discretion.

4.4 Duties of Officers of the County Committee

- A. Chair. The Chair of the County Committee shall preside at all Committee meetings, serve as ex officio member of all committees of the County Committee and have and exercise the usual powers and duties of a Chair.
 - 1. County Offices. The County Chair shall maintain an office where all records of the County Committee shall be kept, and which shall be the official address for the Committee. The approval of the State Committee is required for any lease to be binding on the State Committee or its subdivisions.
 - 2. Employees. The County subdivisions may not engage full time or part time agents or employees, including an Executive Director, accountant, attorney or other agent or employee without prior state committee approval.
- B. Vice Chair; Vacancy in Office of the Kent County Chair. The Vice Chair of another gender from the State Chair shall become acting Chair when the Chair is unable or unwilling to perform those duties. If the Chair is unable to complete their term of office, the Vice Chair of another gender from the Kent County Chair shall succeed to the office of Chair.
- C. Secretary. The Secretary shall keep a complete and permanent record of all the acts and proceedings of the Kent County Democratic Committee. Such records shall be maintained by the Secretary at the County Committee offices and shall be open for inspection by any registered Democrat.
- D. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall keep records of all income and expenses of the State Committee and shall report such finances to each regular meeting of the Kent County Committee.
- E. Records. The records of the Kent County Committee are the property of the Kent County Committee and shall be transferred to the officer's successors. A copy of all such records shall be maintained at the County Offices.

4.5 Removal of Officers of the Kent County Committee

Any officer of the Kent County Committee may be removed only by a two-thirds vote of the County Committee at two (2) successive meetings of the Kent County Committee. If an officer is removed, the County Committee shall elect a replacement for such officer,

who shall serve until the State Convention held under Rule 4.1(A). If such replacement already holds an office of the Kent County Committee, a replacement shall be chosen for such office, who shall serve until the State Convention held under Rule 3.2(C).

4.6 Meetings

The Kent County Committee meets monthly on the second Monday of each month. That date and the place of said meetings shall be announced to all members of the Kent County Committee and shall be provided on request to any registered Democrat. A meeting may be called upon the written request of ten (10) members of the State Committee. The Chair shall call and convene a meeting requested by ten (10) members within fifteen (15) days after receiving the request and shall provide at least five (5) days' notices of said meetings to the State Committee. At the discretion of the County Chair, members may participate by telephone, Internet Connection or other similar means of remote communication and be considered present for all purposes.

4.7 Quorum

One-third of the elected members of the Kent County Executive Common shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of the Kent County Executive Committee

RULE 5 CANDIDATE VACANCIES

5.1 Non-State-wide Elections

If after the deadline for an individual to file notification of candidacy for any office that is to be filled by partisan election, other than a state-wide office, there is no Democratic candidate for such office, or in the event of the need for a special election for any such office, the candidate for such office shall be named under the rules of the subdivision in which all the voters for said office live. If such subdivision rules provide no procedure for filling such vacancies, the Subdivision Chair shall call a meeting within the time provided by law for such vacancy to be filled, giving notice to all Representative District Committee members who would be entitled to vote for such office at a general election, at which meeting the candidate shall be chosen by a majority vote of the District Committee members present and voting. If the voters for such office reside in more than one subdivision, the chair of the subdivision in which the majority of the voters for such office reside shall call a meeting within the time provided by law for such vacancy to be filled, giving notice to all District Committee members in each subdivision who would be entitled to vote for such office at a general election, and shall give notice of the meeting to the other Subdivision Chair, at which meeting the candidate shall be chosen by a majority vote of those District Committee members present and voting.

RULE 6

PARTY PROCEDURE

6.1 Robert's Rules of Order

When not otherwise stated, Robert's Rules of Order, as most recently revised, shall govern any proceedings of any convention or meeting of the Delaware Democratic Party.

6.2 Voting Standard

Unless another standard is provided by these rules or the subdivision rules, all matters shall be subject to a vote of a majority of the members present and voting. For clarity, abstentions shall not count as "no" votes. (For example, in a committee with ten (10) members, if eight (8) are present at a meeting (and so a quorum is present), and five (5) members vote, a measure would pass with a vote of three (3) in favor and two (2) opposed.

6.3 Amendment of Kent County Committee Rules

- A. No Rule contained herein can be altered or amended except as provided by these Rules.
- B. An amendment of these rules may be initiated at any time upon a vote of two-thirds of the members of the Executive Committee.
- C. After the completion of the requirements in Rule 6.3 (B), the County Chair shall ensure that each member of the County Committee shall receive fifteen days written notice of the date, hour, and place of the meeting, along with a copy of the proposed changes and the rules affected. Only amendments germane to the proposals for which such notice has been given shall be considered at the meeting.

6.4 Distribution of Rules.

Within thirty (30) days after adoption of these Rules or any amendment thereof, the State Chair shall cause a copy of said Rules, as amended, to be distributed to each Subdivision Chair, and electronically posted on State and County websites.

6.5 Effective Date of Amendments

Unless stated otherwise in the motion proposing their adoption, amendments to these rules shall become effective immediately upon their adoption.

RULE 7 GRIEVANCES

- A. If any member of the Delaware Democratic party considers that there has been a violation of these County rules by a member or officer of the County Committee or one of its Representative District Committees and that person chooses to pursue this grievance process, that member shall submit their grievance in writing to the Chair of the Representative District committee within ten (10) days of knowledge of the occurrence of the rule violation.
- B. If the vote or disposition of the matter by the Representative District Committee Chair is not satisfactory to the person bringing the complaint, that person may, within ten (10) day after the Representative District Committee meeting, present an appeal in writing to the County Chair. The County Chair shall then notify, immediately the Chair of the County Appeals Committee who shall within two weeks convene a meeting of that Committee for purposes of hearing witnesses and charges. The Appeals Committee shall, within two weeks of that meeting, make recommendation in writing to the executive committee. The executive committee, after reviewing recommendation of the Appeals Committee shall vote on the matter for final disposition and shall immediately inform the complainant and all other persons involved in the complaint in of the decision in writing.

RULE 8 ELECTRONIC MAIL AND VIRTUAL MEETINGS

Whenever these rules require oral notification, written notification, or notification by mail, such notice may include the use of electronic mail or text messages. Any member of the Executive Board of the Kent County Democratic Committee may submit, approve, or deny approval of any resolution or the revision or approval of any action taken by the Kent County Democratic Committee using email, text messages or other electronic means. A resolution or other act of the Kent County Democratic Committee shall be approved if a majority of the Executive Board votes in person or submits an email, text or

electronic message stating their approval of the action taken by the Executive Board of the Committee.

Whenever the State or County government determines that it is unsafe to meet in person, any meeting of the Kent County Democratic Committee may be held by audio visual means such as Zoom, Google Meet or others if the Kent County Democratic Chair deems it to be necessary or appropriate.

RULE 9

REORGANIZATION AFTER REAPPORTIONMENT

A. Redistricting

1. If the boundary of a Representative District is altered by reapportionment, the Representative District Committee organization shall be deemed abolished and the committee members residing in the new Representative District shall meet within 60 days in a central public place on a date set by the County Executive Committee to elect officers and where contests may exist, to elect member of the new Representative District Committee.

B. Filing Fees.

2. Filing fee collected from Candidates not from Kent County shall stay with the County where the candidate resides. Filing fees collected from Kent County candidates shall remain in Kent County.